CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY
CENTER FOR POLICY STUDIES

OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE

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Management of Mixed Cultural and Natural World Heritage Sites in East-Central Europe: A Case Study of Visegrád

2004/2005

CPS INTERNATIONAL POLICY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

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„Management plans tend not to be read"
Oliver Rackham, *The Last Forest*, p. 270.

1. Introduction

1.1 World Heritage and Management Plans

What is UNESCO World Heritage? According to the official definition, it is „cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity ."[1] What it really is is a high prestige collection of those sites that each country values most. Being on the List can have tremendous effects: allegedly one third of world tourism is directed to World Heritage sites. The List has a history of more than three decades, and has gone through many changes. As a sign of the 'maturity' of the system, managing inscribed and potential UNESCO World Heritage sites has recently become a topical issue.[2] For many years after its foundation (1972), the World Heritage Convention was engaged in establishing and then balancing the list of sites, while, although the possibility of deletion from the list existed, what happened to the actual sites was of little concern in the overall mechanism of the Convention. Changes in this general attitude started in the 1980s, but it was as late as 1997 that the States Parties (those countries that have adhered to the Convention) agreed that they would provide Periodic Reports on the conditions of their sites and on the application of the World Heritage Convention.[3]

The compulsory Periodic Reports brought the question of management plans to the centre of attention. It has become clear that only those sites will be able to successfully keep up their standards that have well-designed management plans. A management plan, in any case, should also be necessary because the Periodic Reports need a baseline to which to compare the changes, positive or negative. The new policy of the World Heritage Convention is that *all sites* nominated for inclusion on the List *must* have management plans. In the exceptional other cases, a date must be supplied when the management plan will be available. This will apply also to those sites that are already on the List but lack management plans or traditional management. The Committee also recognised that there should exist examples and models of management plans of different sites to help the preparation of plans for other older and newer sites.

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[1] http://whc.unesco.org/pg.cfm?cid=160
[2] Bernard M. Feilden and Jukka Jokilehto, *Management Guidelines for World Cultural Heritage Sites* (Rome: ICCROM, 1993).
[3] For more on Periodic Reporting, see http://whc.unesco.org/pg.cfm?cid=172.

The present study forms part of the above general trend, and aims at analysing the current management practices of mixed cultural and natural World Heritage sites in East-Central Europe in order to help the preparation of a management plan for the tentative WH listed site of the *Medieval Royal Seat and Forest in Visegrád*, Hungary.[4]

1.2. Visegrád

The *Medieval Royal Seat and Forest at Visegrád* is one of the last European remains of a Royal Forest. Such a Forest was a territory set aside from common law and preserved for royal hunting (primarily of deer). This resulted in an unconscious policy towards what would be termed today as 'nature conservation.' At Visegrád, this policy has been continuous for a thousand years. Forests were also to express the sacred nature of royal power, therefore they often incorporated monastic houses or hermitages associated with the royal house. A Royal Forest includes built heritage – the royal residence, hunting lodges; and natural heritage – the hunting ground. Royal rights were rarely exclusive, and most Forests had common rights attached to them. Therefore Forests evolved as exceptionally complicated systems with consequently intricate landscapes. All elements in such landscapes were of equal importance, which is why Royal Forests are extremely rarely preserved fully intact. While a Royal Forest, strictly speaking, was characteristic of medieval Europe, the association of royal power, hunting, deer and sacred spaces is known outside Europe as well. For example the World Heritage site of the *Historic Monuments of Ancient Nara*, Japan – essentially the eighth-century capital of the island – includes the Kasuga hills with the sacred deer *Cervus nippon*, which are closely connected to a Buddhist monastery in the region.

Visegrád is a significant cultural landscape in the above context. It contains a royal castle (of two parts), a royal palace with its renaissance garden, a Franciscan friary, and the woodland of Pilis within the Duna-Ipoly National Park. None of these – with the exception of the palace, which has the firsts products of Renaissance outside Italy – represent unique values, and all are preserved in and restored to various conditions, however, their *combination* make them an outstanding monument of the kind of landscape structure that was prevailing for half a millennium and created the richest cultural landscapes we know. What enhances the value of this group of landscape elements is that they were – by European standards – untouched

[4] The Tentative List is the official pool of sites in any given country from which those sites to be actually nominated for inclusion into the World Heritage List are chosen.

until the nineteenth century, therefore many of their medieval features were corrupted by deterioration rather than early-modern restructuring.

1.3. Structure of This Study

In order to help the inscription of Visegrád into the World Heritage List, and, somewhat irrespective of this, to understand and manage the site better, in this study I shall analyze the management of two similar World Heritage sites in East-Central Europe: The Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape in the Czech Republic, and Białowieża Forest in Poland. I shall also analyze two sites (not on the WH List) in England: Hatfield Forest and Burnham Beeches. Each of these was chosen for a particular reason. First of all, the Czech and Polish sites, being in the same region as Visegrád, also face many of the problems and challenges of transition countries. The Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape is similar to Visegrád because it is in the same plant geographical region, and also because of its complicated ownership and mixture of built and natural heritage. Białowieża exists today because it was a Royal Forest (although the actual National Park was saved through being inaccessible). This giant wood is generally seen only as a natural site, but its cultural and landscape historical values are just as exciting. Hatfield Forest "is of supreme interest in that all the elements of a medieval Forest survive."[5] It is the only intact example of the last phase in the development of European Royal Forests, with an excellent book on its history and ecology.[6] Burnham Beeches is a good site to study the effects of a major city (London) on a fragile wooded environment.

I have chosen to analyse the following aspects of these sites: ownership, legal protection, and administration (staff, budget, management plans). In theory, I should have analysed these aspects in all four sites in an exactly identical way. However, this turned out to be unrealistic. Just like in historical ecology one has to make do with the data that one finds, in this paper I shall have to rely on the information that I was provided with. Some of the interviews were more successful, some less; some site-managers were happier to talk to me and understood my questions better than others.

Having analysed the four case-study sites, I shall deal more with Visegrád. My aim is to see if the four case-studies offer relevant lessons in managing Visegrád. I shall also try and identify a number of indicators by the help of which we can monitor changes in Visegrád. This is a

[5] Oliver Rackham, *Trees and Woodland in the British Landscape* (London: Phoenix Press, 1990), 180.
[6] Idem, *The Last Forest: The Story of Hatfield Forest* (London: Dent, 1989).

difficult task. Choosing too few or too obvious indicators can lead to false results and eventually mismanagement, too many and too specialised indicators, on the other hand, can make the whole procedure pointless.

2. Białowieża

2.1. Introduction

Białowieża, the Forest of 'the white tower,' "must be the most famous locality in European woodland ecology."[7] It is arguably the last larger remnant of the kind of natural woodland that once (before the Neolithic) covered most of lowland Europe. The whole Forest consists of 62,000 ha, of which the National Park is 10,500 ha.[8] Within the National Park (which is a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve) is the so-called Strict Reserve, which constitutes the World Heritage site. As can be seen from the numbers above, Białowieża has three quite different parts. Most of the woodland belongs to 'state forestries,' that is, state-owned limited companies, which operate on a commercial basis and care little about the preservation of nature. Their interest lies in the production of timber trees. At the other end of the spectrum is the Strict Reserve, in which all management has been banned since 1921. Even access is very limited. Tourists are allowed (for a handsome fee) to visit a tiny bit of the Reserve with a guide. Scientists must go through a lenghty procedure to be able to carry out research in the Reserve. The transition between the two extremes is those parts of the National Park that do not belong to the Strict Reserve. These were added to the NP in 1996, and were effectively taken over from the state forestries. Here, woodland management is not prohibited, but is less commercial-minded. Fallen logs, for example, are not cleared away. There are similar places scattered all over the state forestries, called 'active protected reserves,' where, in theory, management should serve the protection of a given significant aspect of the plot: butterflies, for example.

The history of Białowieża is inseparable from hunting. From the earliest times we know about it (fifteenth century) it has been a game preserve. This function was favoured by Russian tzars as well, who (when they took over this part of Poland) developped the probably somewhat humble hunting residence of the Polish kings into a major complex with a big palace and

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[7] George F. Peterken, *Natural Woodland: Ecology and Conservation in Northern Temperate Regions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 73.

[8] Much of the following description of Białowieża is based on a number of talks with Bogdan Jaroszewicz, deputy director of Białowieża National Park, for whom I am indebted for his kindness and hospitality.

many out-buildings. The palace was destroyed, and massive logging[9] started in the early twentieth century. Most of the primaeval woodland was demolished, the rivers running through the area were straightened into miserable canals to transport the timbers. This would have undoubtedly ripped Białowieża of all of its meaning very quickly. However, before this could happen, the process was stopped by nature conservationists, and the most inaccessible parts – between the rivers Narewka and Hwoźna, just north of the present village of Białowieża – were spared. It was here that the National Park was set up in 1921.

Białowieża is also famous because of the European bison. This beast – a relative of the American bison – populated the woods until 1919, when the last one was shot. Bisons were reintroduced (from zoos) ten years later, but this was not a mere touristic attraction. European bisons are carefully analysed and catalogued, their pedigree book is kept in Białowieża, at the local Mammal Research Institute.[10] Besides bisons, there are many more animals in the woods, most importantly several predators, which keep the numbers of deer on an acceptable level.

The Forest, in fact, consists of two parts. On the Belorussian side both the National Park and the World Heritage site continue. The latter is a joint site of the two countries. All of this, however, remains on a theoretical level. A modernised version of the Iron Curtain (on the Belorussian side) cuts through the Forest, which no creature without wings can cross. Until the Polish accession to the European Union this was more or less one-sided, but the border is soon to separate the Schengen countries from the rest of the world. As a sign, the local crossing point was closed down, and now if the directors of the two National Parks want to meet, instead of a ten-minute ride, one of them has to travel 200 km. Everybody realises that this is a problem, but given the political situation in Belarus, things appear to change for the worse, if at all.

World Heritage plays only a limited part in this story. Białowieża was already famous before its inscription on the WH List (1979), and most people would not even know that it is on the

[9] Cutting the best trees, taking them away and leaving the place without a care of what happens there. The favourite form of woodland exploitation in the tropics today.
[10] Zdzisław Pucek, "European Bison – History of a Flagship Species," in *Essays on Mammals of Białowieża Forest*, ed. Bogumiła Jędrzejewska and Jan M. Wójcik (Mammal Research Institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Białowieża, 2004), 25-42.

List. There is no specialised personnel dealing with WH issues, in fact, WH is hardly mentioned at all, except as a title that sounds prestigous.

2.2. Ownership

The World Heritage site, as we have seen above, equals the Strict Reserve. When the National Park was enlarged in 1996, the World Heritage site was not made bigger, but then neither was the Strict Reserve. The ownership of the WH site is very simple. It is, without exception, state-owned. The National Park, which manages it, is a governmental body, part of the Ministry of Environment.

2.3. Legal Protection

The basis for the legal protection of Białowieża Forest is the Polish Act on Nature Protection (1991).[11] The WH site is protected because it is in a National Park. The whole National Park, as mentioned above, is a UNESCO Biosphere reserve, the entire Forest is a Nature 2000 site, and received a European Diploma in 1997, which was renewed in 2002. Because the ownership is so simple, legal protection is not extremely important. The National Park has virtually absolute authority over the WH site. The only problematic issue is that of the bisons. These beasts are the responsibility of the National Park, however, they are not confined to the territory of the Park. They move freely on the whole territory of the Forest. When they happen to be in the state forestries, the foresters consider them as a destructive force to tree regeneration. Whether they have the right to shoot them or not is a source of constant conflict between the forestries and the National Park.

2.4. Administration

2.4.1.Staff

The World Heritage site, as such, has no separate administration. All that will be written below concerns the National Park. There are 110 (!) people working for the National Park, however, twenty-five of them deal solely with the bisons. Strangely, forty-five work in the state forestries, where, in theory, the National Park has no authority. Ten people are employed in the Education Centre, six in the Scientific Department. There is a fairly well-stocked administrative unit, and lastly there are four rangers, whose job it is to patrol the Strict Reserve and fine the trespassers.

The National Park is lead by a director. He has two deputy directors, one responsible for nature protection, one for science, education and access. They report to the director, and so do the independent finance, legal, and law enforcements units. Within the authority of the deputy directors, there are several managers responsible for the different areas. They report to the deputy directors, and all documents produced by them, even if intended for the director, have to pass through the hands of the relevant deputy director. All outside documents go through the inverted version of this: they first reach the secretariat of the director, from where they are passed on to the deputy directors and then to the managers. In theory, all managers and deputy directors have monthly meetings with the director.

2.4.2. Budget

The National Park has two financial units. One of them is state-supported, the other is independent. The state-supported unit, as suggested by the name, gets funding from the state (there are sources of money in Poland that must, as a rule, be spent on nature protection). If, on the other hand, they produce any profit from whatever they do, it must flow back to the central budget. Half of the money they get is spent on the salaries of the workers. The Economic Unit, in contrast, has complete financial independence. It deals with such things as the entrance fees to the local museum, booklets about the National Park, etc. It also provides salaries for about one third of the employees. The Economic Unit produces about half the money coming from the government. Private donations to the National Park do exist, but are insignificant. The figures for the year 2003 were as follows:

year	Central Budget			Economic Unit		Donations
	Total income	expenditure: Salaries	expenditure: Infrastructure	Total income	expenditure: Salaries	
2003	4,145,063 PLN	2,032,529 PLN	813,500 PLN	2,016,372 PLN	573,461 PLN	26,404 PLN

2.4.3. Management Plans

The World Heritage site does not have a separate management plan. The Management Plan of the National Park is used, which has a long histoy. It started to develop in the 1980s, and with the Act on Nature Protection in place from 1991, it was finished by 2000. The following year,

[11] For more on this, see http://www.eeac-network.org/bodies/poland/pl_scnp.htm.

however, the regulations changed, and the old Management Plan had to be thrown away. The new Management Plan is much shorter than its predecessor, because it contains far fewer scientific data. While the latter was written by a large group of people including a number of scholars working on the site, the present Plan is solely the work of the National Park. Its central part is the action plan for the site, however, the *aims* of those actions receive far less attention than they should. At the moment (summer of 2004) the Management Plan is being approved by the Minister of Environment. When that happens, it will have to be countersigned by the local governments of the pertinent townships. The trick of the situation is that the laws are bound to change again as of 1 November 2004, which means that if the Management Plan is not fully accepted by that time, it may have to be rewritten again.

In sum, the National Park (and consequently the World Heritage site) was, for a long while, on the way to having a carefully written management plan, but for the past few years environmental politics has played a much larger role in the events than it ought to. It might happen that, for the second time, the Management Plan will have to be replaced by another one, written to the latest standards devised by someone who may have never seen the site. Such instability is arguably one of the worst things that can happen to management plans. Here, it seems to go hand-in-hand with the bureaucrat's wish to control and unify.

The finally approved Management Plan is subject to revision every ten years. A further problem, which the National Park administration will have to face at some point, is that all plans discussed so far are written in Polish. The World Heritage site, however, should have an English language management plan as well.

3. Hatfield Forest

3.1. Introduction

Hatfield Forest is the last intact surviving example of a medieval Forest. I have already briefly introduced Forests at the beginning of this study, but there I left their most important aspect unmentioned. All through their medieval existence, Forests were „a place of deer, not necessarily a place of trees."[12] This is why such places we spell Forest (with capital F) to avoid confusion with the modern word 'forest.' A place of trees is called a wood or woodland. This was very clear in the case of English Royal Forests, which existed from the eleventh century onwards, and less so in other Forests in other places and periods. Forests originated in

the Merovingian Frankish Empire, some time in the sixth-seventh centuries. The Merovingians, and following their example most medieval people, understood that the word Forest (the Latin *forestum*) came from the Latin *foris*, meaning 'outside,' that is, outside common law. In general, they associated such Forests with marginality, which happened to coincide with woodland. This concept has proven to be a far-reaching one: Białowieża, although in most English language publications it is called 'forest,' in Polish is termed *puszcza*, which means 'empty land.' We should notice that the same word, in the form *puszta*, in Hungarian means vast treeless plains.

Royal Forests were always associated, from the very beginning, with hunting.[13] *Forestum* started out with territories reserved for royal hunting,[14] but later "slowly ceased to be a property (royal or ex-royal) with specific rights attached, and began to be a right on its own," and finally "kings began to grant forest [Forest] rights over the properties of third parties too – forest [Forest] rights and property were . . . decisively divorced."[15] The creation of such Forests had to be reconciled (or at least made enforceable) both with the local nobility and the peasantry. While the former were often left dissatisfied, the traditional common rights of the latter were usually not cut back very severely.[16] English Forests, the last and clearest phase in the development of the concept, were sometimes wooded, but sometimes completely treeless (Dart*moor* Forest, for example). In the thirteenth century, which is the best documented for this topic, they were about one-fifth wooded. The treeless parts in Forests were mostly pasture for the deer.

Hatfield Forest was created most probably in the twelfth century. Until 1460 it was in royal possession, then it was private property until 1857 when it was enclosed. The enclosure (the abolishment of common lands and rights usually together with the erection of hedges to transform former common land into small private fields) destroyed the social fabric of

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[12] Rackham, *Last Forest*, 38.
[13] Heinrich Rubner, "Vom römischen Saltus zum fränkischen Forst," *Historisches Jahrbuch* 83 (1964): 271-277; Jörg Jarnut, "Die frühmittelalterliche Jagd unter rechts- und sozialgeschichtlichen Aspekten," *Settimane di Studio* 31 (1985): 765-808; Régine Hennebicque, "Espaces sauvages et chasses royales dans le Nord de la Francie, VIIe – IXe siècles," *Revue du Nord* 62 (1980): 35-57; Massimo Montanari, *Campagne medievali : strutture produttive, rapporti di lavoro, sistemi alimentari* (Turin: Einaudi, 1984), 174-190.
[14] Chris Wickham, "European Forests in the Early Middle Ages: Landscape and Land Clearance," in *Land and Power: Studies in Italian and European Social History, 400-1200* (London: British School at Rome, 1994), 155-199.
[15] Ibid., 160.
[16] For England: Jean Birrel, "Common Rights in the Medieval Forest: Disputes and Conflicts in the Thirteenth Century," *Past and Present* 117 (1987): 22-49. For France: Michel Aubrun, "Droits d'usages forestiers et libertés paysannes (XIe – XIIIe siècle)," *Revue Historique* 280 (1988): 377-386.

Hatfield, but most of the actual Forest was spared. It survives, because the Houblon family (its owner since 1729) appreciated it as a historic landscape and kept up most of the traditional management. In 1924, Edward North Buxton – a lifelong preserver of Forests – bought Hatfield and donated it to the National Trust, in whose possession it has been ever since. Hatfield Forest did not perish in the last two hundred years, unlike basically all other English Forests, *because there was a family who loved it, and a man who understood it*. Without understanding what it means to be a Forest, Buxton could not have realized that there was anything to save when Hatfield was put on the market in 1924.

Hatfield Forest comprises woodland and plains. In 1988, the woods were 487.1 acres, the plains 422.3 acres, which together with an 8-acre lake, make a total of 917.4 acres. This arrangement goes back to the Middle Ages. Also from medieval times is the most important animal in the Forest: fallow deer. This is an eastern beast that was imported into England in the eleventh century.

The National Trust has not always been the careful owner that one would expect it to be. Although ancient management, or the Houblon version of it, was continued until World War II, from the 1950s to the 1970s there was considerable 'improvement' in Hatfield. Some of the woods were destroyed and replaced by conifer plantations (not native to England). The plains were also damaged by replacing old grassland with what was considered back then as better grassland. From the mid-seventies, however, the National Trust has been a more careful owner, and now the site is managed better than at any time for centuries.

3.2. Ownership

Quite like in Białowieża, ownership in Hatfield is simple.[17] The National Trust, owner of the site since 1924, is a registered charity and completely independent of government.[18] It has its own Act of Parliament, which makes its properties inalienable. Hatfield Forest therefore belongs to one legal body and cannot be taken away from it under any pretext. The Trust is a powerful mass-movement: at the moment (2004) it has 3.3 million members, 4,000 full-time staff, 38,000 volunteers, and tens of millions of pounds to spend yearly.

[17] The following is based on information from Adrian Clarke, Property Manager of Hatfield, whom I wish to thank.

[18] For more on the Trust, see http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk.

3.3. Legal Protection

Because the Forest is the property of the National Trust, the most important thing is that the Trust does the right thing. There is, however, some control over the NT. Hatfield is also a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and is thus protected through the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000). It is also a National Nature Reserve. This in practice means that the National Trust has to consult English Nature on the Management Plan.[19] What happens to Hatfield, nonetheless, mostly depends on what the National Trust chooses to do, which in turns is the consequence of how much it understands the *genius loci*.

3.4. Administration

3.4.1. Staff

The National Trust at Hatfield has nine permanent employees and eight seasonal staff. The permanent team comprises the Property Manager, Head Warden, two Wardens, an Education Officer, an Administration Assistant, a Careership Apprentice Warden, a Visitor Reception Assistant and a Catering Manager. The various seasonal posts include for example the Entrance Gate kiosk staff and café staff. This is very reasonable for such a small place. In fact, in the SWOT analysis in the Property Management Plan for 2004-2007, the level of staffing is considered to be a strength. In addition, the Forest receives many volunteer workers every year. Their work is mostly used in seasonal occupations, such as the maintenance of hedges and fences or the cutting of trees.

3.4.2. Budget

The National Trust is entirely self-financing. This is the price it has to pay for being independent of government. The yearly budget of Hatfield is £200,000. Part of this comes from the National Trust, and a smaller part is produced on site. Tourism is a main income factor. Although the Forest is free to visit, the income from the café, shops, parking etc. gets into the budget of the Forest. A main aim of the Forest administration is to increase the number of visitors (now 250,000 yearly), however, they are aware of the dangers of this. Their policy is to develop the site in a way that would keep visitors around the lake area, releaving the pressure on the environmentally more sensitive regions. The Forest also has

[19] How English Nature can enforce its policies is laid out at http://www.english-nature.org.uk/special/sssi/images/EnforcementPolicyNotice.pdf.

minor incomes from its own resources. They sell the trees that are cut, and approximately £2000 come from selling the meat of the deer shot in the Forest.

3.4.3. Management Plans

The first management plan of Hatfield was prepared twenty-five years ago. Now there are two kinds of it: the Property Management Plan and the Conservation Plan. The former is revised every year, and a new one is written every three years. The present Property Management Plan (which is a public document, though not available on the Internet) sets out detailed tasks for the people involved in the management, grouped around four subjects: 1. inspiring support 2. improving conservation and environmental quality 3. managing affairs effectively and efficiently 4. developing people and knowledge. It is a lengthy list of many objectives, strategies and actions to achieve these goals, together with responsibilities and output requirements. The continuous monitoring of this Plan is the duty of the Management Team, made up of the property manager, the head warden and the education officer. The Team has quarterly meetings.

The Conservation Plan is under preparation. It is longer term, valid for ten years. It will deal with the conservation of the Hatfield historic ecosystem, and is foreseen to give the place the very detailed treatment it certainly deserves. For example each of the *ca.* 800 ancient trees will be discussed separately.

In sum, Hatfield Forest is in an admirable position. Historical knowledge is firm, ownership is clear, money, if not overflowing, is adequate, and those responsible for the site seem to be doing a good job. At this place, work can really concentrate on the details, which provide the meaning of the Forest. At the moment, the greatest threat to the site is a possible extension of Stanstead Airport, just a few kilometres to the north.

4. Burnham Beeches

4.1. Introduction

Burnham Beeches is 540 acres of woodland and wood-pasture in South Buckinghamshire, 40 km west of London.[20] It belongs to the Corporation of London, and is primarily valued for its

[20] My sincere thanks to Helen Read, Conservation Officer at Burnham Beeches, for her hospitality and helpfulness.

ancient pollarded beech trees. The Corporation's main aim with the site is to protect it as an open space for public recreation.

Burnham is a survivor of the ordinary medieval and early-modern landscape in the vicinity of one of Europe's largest cities. Traditionally, the area was unenclosed common land grazed by the commoners' animals, with large trees that were cut above the reach of the animals creating characteristic and beautiful trees known as pollards. In the seventeenth century, woodbanks were dug around two smaller areas, from which animals were subsequently excluded. The area also used to contain extensive heathland and mires. Even before the Corporation acquired Burnham in the nineteenth century, traditional uses fell into neglect. In the twentieth century, pollarding and coppicing were no longer practiced, and grazing was disappearing to the extent that most of the area became wooded.

4.2. Ownership

Burnham Beeches is the property of the Corporation of London. The Corporation is the Local Authority for the City of London (not the *town*, but the *City*: that one square mile in the centre). It has a very long history reaching back some eight hundred years, to the Middle Ages. The Corporation does many more things besides governing the City. For example, it owns and manages more than 10,000 acres of land in and around London for public recreation. Burnham Beeches is one of these open spaces. The Corporation is registered charity and is non-political.

In the 1870s, with the advance of enclosure and urban developent, the Corporation was concerned that sooner or later Londoners would lose any access to open spaces for recreation. It therefore launched a campaign to protect at least some of the areas in and around London. In 1878, the Open Spaces Act was passed in Parliament, which permitted the Corporation to buy common spaces around London. The Act also made lands thus acquired inalienable, and stressed that such lands had to remain open for the public. Burnham Beeches was bought by the Corporation in 1880, however, the back then enclosed woodlots inside did not count as common land, therefore they could not be purchased under the Open Spaces Act. These were donated to the Corporation in the twentieth century.

At the moment, ownership is simple and clear. The whole of Burnham Beeches belongs to one separate legal body, which has its own Act of Parliament so that its lands cannot be taken away from it.

4.3. Legal Protection

As in the case of Hatfield, with such simple ownership the most important thing is what the Corporation decides to do. Burnham Beeches (like Hatfield) is also a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a National Nature Reserve, which means that management plans has to be agreed upon by English Nature. Furthermore, Burnham is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC – a scheme of the European Union), which confers an even higher degree of protection and prevents any operation or activity that may have a significant negative effect on the integrity of the site. This includes management projects as well as local development. The central question, as ever, is whether we recognise the real values of the site.

4.4. Administration

4.4.1. Staff

The Superintendent is in charge of the whole site and is basically the site manager. He forms the 'management team' with the Conservation Officer and Senior Keeper. The Senior Keeper is responsible for the day-to-day practical stuff and supervises six Keepers who do this (one of whom is an Assistant Keeper as s/he is younger and has less experience). The Keepers also lead guided walks and are the first point of contact for the visiting public. There is also an Administration Officer who reports to the Superintendent. All the above staff are full-time employees. Short term contracts are used to employ seasonal Keepers and assistant ecologists according to need. A valuable addition is the many site volunteers who currently provide the equivalent of around 500 additional days' work per year.

Superintendent
Conservation Officer Senior Keeper Administration Officer
Management Team |
6 Keepers

The Superintendent is one of six. The others are each responsible for Open Spaces or groups of Open Spaces owned/managed by the Corporation. Some of these are nature reserves but some are purely recreation areas and more formal city parks. The Superintendents all report to

the Director of Open Spaces who is based in London and has a small team working with her, who provide expertise on e.g. health and safety issues, computers etc.

There are also Committees that oversee the work at the Open Spaces. There are three Committees, one for the City Open Spaces, one for Hampstead Heath and one for the other sites (which are more conservation orientated). There is also an over-arching Committee that deals with issues that are common to all of the Open Spaces.

4.4.2. Budget

The yearly budget of Burnham Beeches is around £500,000. Last year, £372,800 was people related costs (salaries, essential training, insurances etc.). Another £25,900 was used for building repairs and maintenance. As well as running the office, seven of the staff live in houses provided by the Corporation and their maintenance is paid for. The remainder covers everything else.

The funding for the site is from the Corporation's private resources (The City's Cash), not from governmental money, and is budgeted for two years in advance. Belonging to the Corporation is a great advantage of Burnham Beeches. The Corporation is a rich institution – it governs one of the richest pieces of land on the Earth. Apparently, it takes its responsibility to provide open spaces for Londoners rather seriously. Funding for different projects at Burnham is always adequate. Also, I cannot possibly imagine that any institution responsible for a Nature Reserve in East-Central Europe would rent houses for its employees, especially in the kind of expensive neighbourhood that Burnham has recently become.

4.4.3. Management Plans

The present, six-year Management Plan is available on the Internet.[21] The previous plan ran for 5 years before that and was the first complete plan for the site. The current one runs out in March 2005, and so the Burnham staff are in the middle of reviewing it. The usual length for such plans is 5 years. The present one is for 6 years in order to get in line with some other plans within the Corporation.

[21] http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/0579B61A-0927-401E-A9CA-FDBB7C55D0DF/0/OS_BB_manage9905.pdf

The Management Plan is divided into four sections: description, evaluation, objectives, prescription. Before these are a brief but informative description of the Corporation of London and a summary of the Management Plan. The first two sections are especially important. Burnham Beeches is one of those sites where ample emphasis is put on defining what the important aspects of the site are. As in other countries, this may go against official regulations and categorisations. These, with their limited number of categories to describe an infinitely variable nature, tend to homogenize landscapes. In worse cases, even vaguely adequate categories are missing. Wood-pasture (with pollards), the real value of Burnham, for example, is non-existent in the eyes of the European Union. Burnham Beeches is a SAC as a beech wood, although it is only a second-rate beech wood. It is important that the meaning of the site, regardless of centralised categories, is clearly stated in the management plan. The staff (and their funding), however, did not stop at this point. Burnham Beeches is one of the most active places in the world in the study of pollarding. This stems from the recognition that most valuable habitats of the site (ancient pollards) are poorly understood in general. Basic research is needed, which then can be put into practice to save some of the trees at Burnham. Helen Read, Conservation Officer, is mostly responsible for this work.

In the next management plan, statements will be included about longer term plans and much simpler, broader plans will be developed for the next 100 years and the next 500 years. This is a bit controversial but Helen Read tells me that they feel that when talking about trees with life spans of 500 years or so, they should also be thinking about this kind of future.

5. Lednice-Valtice

5.1. Introduction

The Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape (LVA – the abbreviation from the Czech expression *Lednicko-Valtický Areál*) is situated in the southern part of Moravia, the eastern half of the Czech Republic.[22] It was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1996. This site was, in fact, the first example of a designed parkscape inscribed *as such* on the WH List.[23] The total size is 185 square km, all of which is core area, there is no buffer zone. This vast geographical space includes nine settlements, although the inner areas of six of these are excluded from the WH

[22] Much of the following is based on an interview with Libor Kabát, mayor of Lednice, whom I wish to thank. I would also like to express my gratitude to Radim Hedl, for his invaluable help in organising my trips to the site.
[23] Peter Fowler, "World Heritage Cultural Landscapes, 1992–2002: A Review and Prospect," in *Cultural Landscapes: The Challenges of Conservation*, World Heritage Papers 7 (Paris: World Heritage Centre, 2003) 16–32.

site. The whole area is part of a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, which has had its own line of development. It was established on a nearby site in 1986, and was extended to include the WH area in 2003.

The LVA is really an immense park with two major castles in Lednice and Valtice. It was designed and landscaped from the seventeenth century onwards, mostly based on Baroque and Neogothic architecture, and English romantic park design. It is among the largest formally designed landscapes in Europe. It testifies to the power of the Lichtenstein family, who owned the territory until the mid-twentieth century.

5.2. Ownership

With such a large territory, one would not expect a clear and simple ownership situation, but the LVA is far more complicated than one would imagine. Most of the territory of is state-owned, however, it is difficult to say what this means in reality. The biggest problem is that until the mid-twentieth century, ownership – and management responsibilites – were very simple: the whole area was the property of the Lichtenstein family. With communism, the Lichtenstein were expropriated, moreover, the German population dwelling in the region was expelled. This created such problems as still can be felt. Basically, the ruling regime until 1989 was never too keen on precisely clarifying the ownership situation in the region. This was then further complicated by the fall of communism. At some point the state of affairs became so hopeless that the government decided that a 'complex ground arrangement plan' should be prepared, which would meticulously describe and decide the ownership relations of every piece of land here. This plan, however, is a rather costly undertaking. It is estimated to use up twenty million CZK for the town of Lednice alone. Unfortunately, this kind of money is not at all available for this region. In the end, the situation is as follows: everybody and every institution agrees that the 'complex ground arrangement plan' has to be prepared as soon as possible to clarify who owns what under what conditions in the LVA. However, no one knows where the money to finance this will come from.

5.3. Legal protection

The most important legal means of protection for the LVA is the Czech Law on the Protection of Monuments. This has several categories for different levels of protection. The highest level is 'national monuments,' in the LVA the castles in Lednice and Valtice with their surrounding parks fall into this category. The whole of the LVA is a 'protected landscape monument

zone,' which represents a lower level of protection. The irony of the situation is that the 'protected landscape monument zone' was established in 1992 in order to foster the WH issue. The site was inscribed on the WH List in 1996, and only afterwards did the castles and immediate parks become 'national monuments.' That is to say, although originally the whole idea was focussed on the landscape, in the final situation the castles are better protected.

Some of the LVA is also protected through international conventions. I have already mentioned the Biosphere Reserve. The fishponds at Lednice (650 ha) are Ramsar sites (Wetlands of International Importance), and larger areas are being assigned as NATURA 2000 sites, the nature protection framework of the European Union.

5.4. Administration

5.4.1. Staff

There is no one responsible solely for World Heritage issues at the site. It would be meaningless to go into details about the numbers of staff at the individual local governments, I should rather mention the plans for the future of the LVA. In 2000, the local governments established a microregion covering basically the WH site. The governing committee of the microregion meet once a month, although at present they have no statutory power. Their main aim is to co-ordinate the activities in the LVA. A major achievement has been the establishment of a separate governmental committe, consisting of six ministers, which, in the future, will be directly responsible for the site.

5.4.2. Budget

The WH site has no separate budget. Money comes from either the local governments or from ad hoc funding opportunities. The castles have their own budgets from the Ministry of Culture. A typical example of ad hoc funds was the 2000-2002 project of the LVA, in which the site won 120 million CZK from the government to improve the region. Most of the money, however, was spent on the reconstruction of the castles (which are in a fairly bad state of repair), for example the reconstruction of the famous greenhouse in Lednice cost 42 million CZK. As we have seen in the case of protection, even though the raison d'être of the site is the landscape, little of the sources available is actually spent on it. To somewhat balance this situation, in 2002 the LVA won another 32 million CZK from the same fund, which was spent on landscape management, mostly on restoring the original conditions of the surroundings of the fishponds. At the moment, there are a number of peculiarities in the

distribution of the money that the site itself produces. For example, the entrance fees from the castles are completely taken away and are fed into the central governmental budget.

Improvement in this situation is hoped through the activity of the LVA microregion. The committee seek to finally establish a common, regular fund for the management of the site and also regular opportunities for outside funding.

5.4.3. Management Plans

At the moment, the WH site does not have a management plan. Furthermore, unlike in many other cases, there are no management plans of separate institutions that would cover the whole site. The castles and their parks have their own management plans, but most of the landscape does not. Monitoring activites started three years ago, which would certainly help the production of the management plan, once it happens. It is very well known that because of the Periodic Reporting of WH sites, sooner or later there must be management plan for the LVA.

The woods of the site are managed by the local forestry company. The trouble is that the forestry is a commercial enterprise, and the mostly floodplain woods of the region are highly productive, rather suitable for modern forestry methods. Nature protection is in a defensive position in the woods of the region.

The solution to the question of management plans would be the execution of the ‘complex ground arrangement plan.’ With this in place, the LVA microregion committee could take control over the management of the area. In general, it appears as though the situation at the LVA is in transition, or, better say, has been in transition since at least 1989. The WH status has been a step towards the goal that all parties seem to agree upon: unified management for the whole site, with a clear ownership situation, clear responsibilities, and secure permanent and ad hoc funding.

6. Visegrád and Pilis

6.1. Site selection

I have already briefly introduced Visegrád in Chapter 1.[24] The site consists of a medieval royal palace (with its garden), two castles, a Franciscan friary,[25] and the surrounding Forest. As argued above, it is the *combination* of these elements that makes Visegrád special. This site has once been through the World Heritage nomination process. In 2000, I also participated in the preparation of the WH documents. For various reasons, however, this nomination was withdrawn. Presently, negotiations are held with the pertinent Hungarian authorities that a new nomination be prepared. The present study forms part of this proces.

Many World Heritage sites consist of two zones: the property itself and the buffer zone. The latter is defined "as an area surrounding the property which has restrictions placed on its use to give an added layer of protection."[26] When delimiting the boundary of the proposed site in Visegrád in 2000, we decided to adopt this double system for a number of reasons. The most important of these was ownership. The original idea was to create a World Heritage site similar to Białowieża, encompassing the whole National Park. This, however, was unrealistic because of the extreme complications in ownership. The territory of the National Park includes several settlements, and also such oddities as an Open-Air Ethnographic Museum, the pseudo-ruins of a castle built for a film, or the very real ruins of a holiday resort originally built for the National Bank of Hungary. The lessons taught be by the Lednice-Valtice site also suggested that unclear ownership relations should be avoided.

As a solution, the Visegrád site equals the township of Visegrád with selected monuments in the town, and the buffer zone is the Pilis part of the Duna-Ipoly National Park. This way we wanted to solve two problems. The World Heritage property became relatively trouble-free (of which more later), and the obvious integrity of the whole National Park was included in the nomination as a positive feature. As the buffer zone is intended as "an added layer of protection" rather than the area to be protected, the many problems connected to it became irrelevant, and what mattered was its National Park status and the protection this provides

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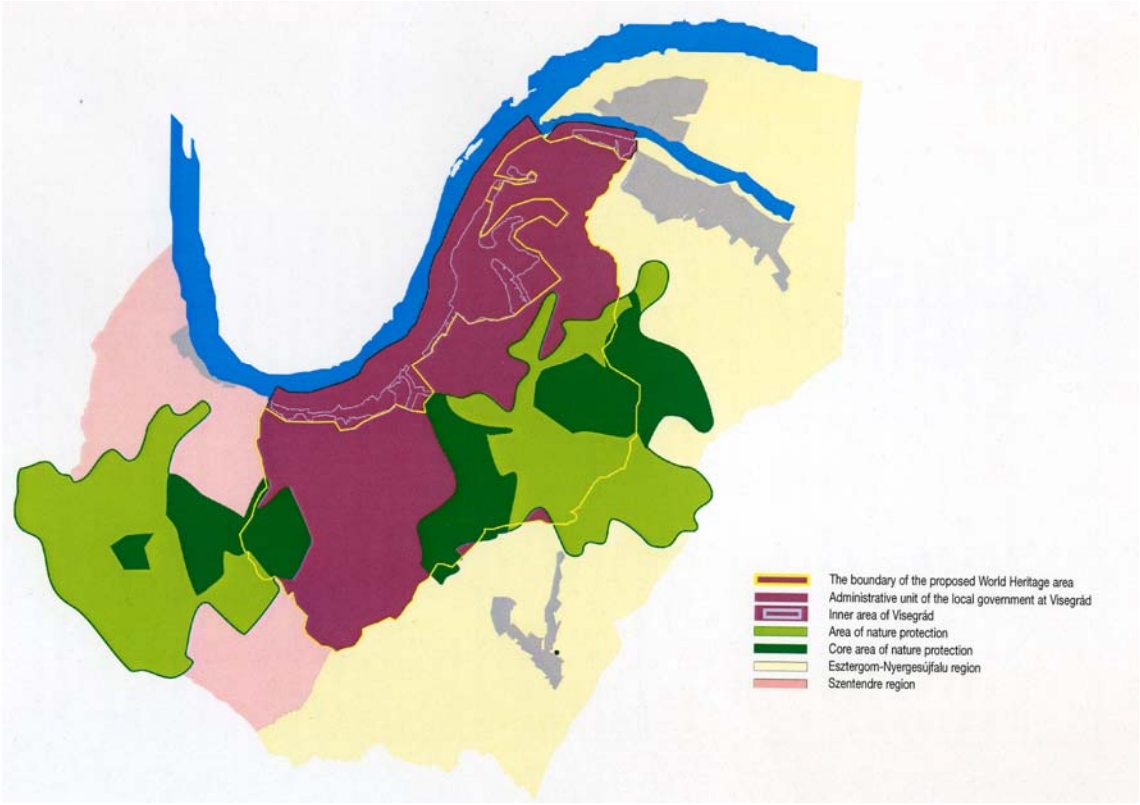
[24] I interviewed the following people during my research on Visegrád and Pilis: Árpád Kalotai, vice-mayor of Visegrád; Péter Erdős, leader of the Visegrád unit of Pilis Parkforestry Ltd; Miklós Papp, leader of the Pilis unit of the Duna-Ipoly National Park; András Füri, vice-director of the Duna-Ipoly National Park Directorate; Gergely Buzás, archaeologist, King Matthias Museum in Visegrád. I wish to thank all of them.

[25] József Laszlovszky, ed., *Medieval Visegrád: Royal Castle, Palace, Town and Franciscan Friary* *Budapest: Institute of Archaeology, Eötvös Loránd University, 1995).

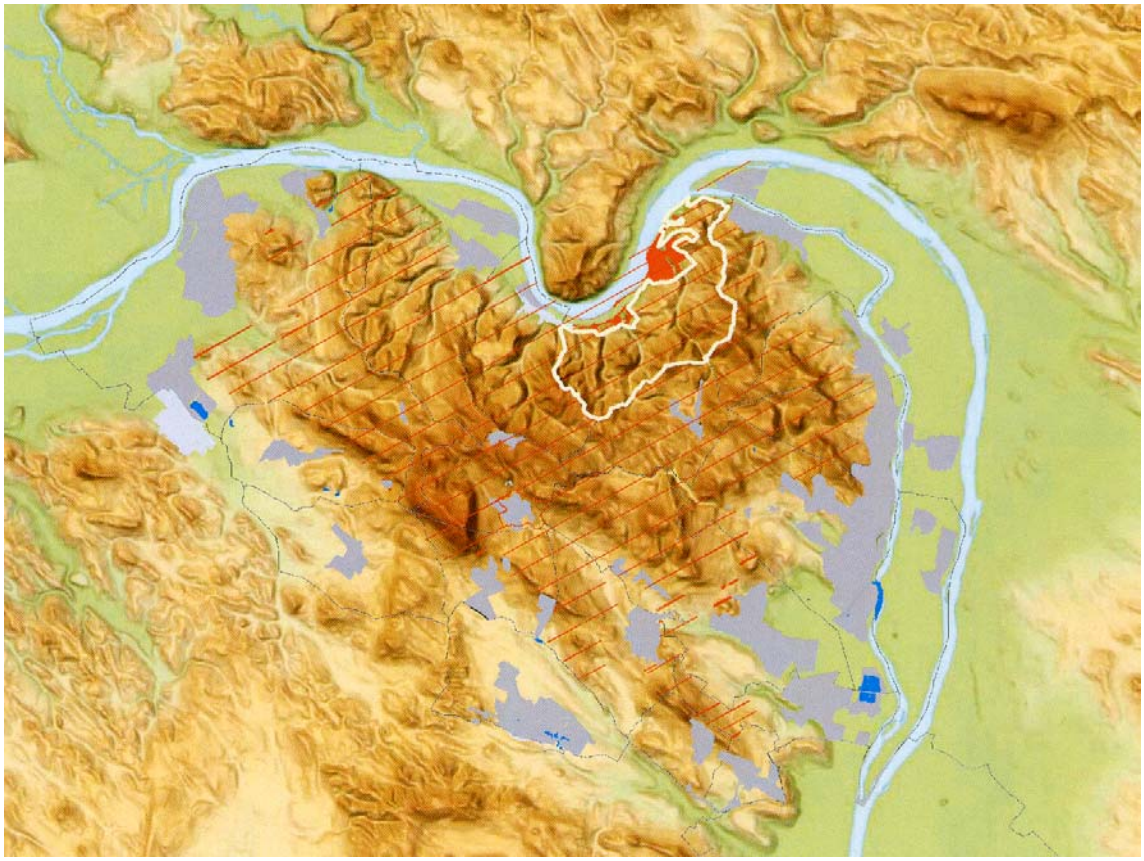
[26] http://whc.unesco.org/pg.cfm?cid=265&l=en

around the township of Visegrád. The buffer zone also connects the site to another important aspect: this part of the National Park is a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.

Within the town of Visegrád, the site includes the (remains of the) royal palace, the Franciscan friary, the lower and upper castles, and the Roman fortress (later adopted to be a castle in the tenth-eleventh centuries) on Sibrik hill. The rest of the town was deliberately avoided because of ownership complications. This lead to a relatively compact block as the WH site, except for one place: the former National Bank holiday resort. This piece of land with the ruins of a building is more than problematic: even the simple question as to who owns it cannot be answered with certainty. Anything that will eventually happen to it will involve hundreds of millions of forints, obviously beyond the capacities of the local government. Therefore it had to be cut out of the proposed site, however odd a line this produced on the map. Outside the town, the site boundary follows the township boundary of Visegrád. This sometimes crosses the boundary of strictly protected areas, however, that seemed a lesser problem than including the territory of other townships.



The World Heritage core area



The World Heritage core area and buffer zone

6.2. The Historical Aspect

The essence of cultural landscapes is their historical development. Without understanding how they evolved, it is impossible to manage them properly. In other words, first we must understand what we have, and only then can we start thinking about what we should do with it. This, however, is not a simple task to achieve. Landscapes are far more difficult subjects than buildings, for example. Not only do they involve the activities of civilisations long gone and civilisations that did not care to write, but they also incorporate the workings of nature, which, at the moment, are understood only superficially. The study of the *combination* of human and natural activities has a rather short history,[27] and the future of the world's cultural landscapes depends on how quickly advances are made in this field, and how quickly the knowledge thus acquired is put into policy practice and practical management.

According to a widely accepted theory – which, nonetheless, explains the dimly-lit beginnings of Hungarian history, and therefore will never be aptly proven – around the year 1000, when the Kingdom of Hungary was formed, uninhabited and lordless lands went into the possession of the king. Pilis was one of these, and until the end of the Middle Ages the sources talk about it as "the king's own Forest".[28] Initially, this more or less wooded area was a royal hunting ground, several hunting lodges were built to serve the needs of the royal family. The king himself hunted sometimes in person, yet if it was for venison, he mostly relied on the people called 'erdőóvó' (Forest-guard). Then, in the thirteenth century, alongside with the changes that transformed the whole kingdom, this system was also altered. As more and more land went out of royal possession, Pilis, which had been regarded as an oversized private estate, achieved another administrative form, and became one of the counties of the kingdom. This county, however, was different from other ones due to the fact that it was mainly wooded. Certain characteristics of ordinary counties were entirely missing, certain people (such as the Forest-guards) replaced ordinary folks. A Royal Forest, as it was mentioned in medieval sources, is not to be imagined as an oversized wood: it certainly had more trees than the neighbouring regions, but it was an administrative unit, not a biological one.

[27] The first larger study was probably Colin R. Tubbs, *The New Forest: An Ecological History* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1968). Note that this was also about a Royal Forest.

[28] For more on the history of Pilis, see Péter Szabó, *Woodland and Forests in Medieval Hungary*, BAR Central European Series 2 (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2005).

The transformation of the royal estate into the Royal Forest went parallel with the transformation of the hunting lodges into monastic houses. This is a speciality of Pilis: there were four monasteries within the Forest, three Pauline (Szentlászló, Szentlélek, Szentkereszt) and a Cistercian. Pilis provided the most suitable location possible: secluded from the mundane world, yet within a day's walk from the most important centres of the kingdom: Buda, Visegrád, Esztergom, or Fehérvár. The Paulines are especially interesting in the respect that this order is the only Hungarian-founded monastic movement, which, as far as they their knowledge went, sought its origins in Pilis Forest.

Another event of the highest significance in the history of Pilis was the construction of the castle of Visegrád in the mid-thirteenth century. There had been a castle in Visegrád before, built upon the ruins of a Roman fortress on Sibrik-hill,[29] the focal place of the ancient Co. Visegrád. This fell from use by the early 1200s, for the county centre moved to Esztergom. While hunting residences gradually became out-of-date and the Forest was in need of some new function, Queen Mary (wife of King Béla IV) apparently driven by her own ideas, started to build a castle above the old fortress, financed by selling her own jewels. The new castle was at least partly ready by 1251.

The settlement system of the area also reflects this basic development pattern, yet has its own peculiarities. Today one will find relatively few nucleated villages with high population where there used to be many more smaller settlements. We know of one hundred medieval settlements, thirty-seven of which have their names preserved in documents. The smaller ones without known names are characteristic of the Árpádian period (1000-1301), they represent an age when there was constant tension between royal rights and settlements encroaching upon royal land. In the fourteenth-fifteenth centuries, there existed about thirty larger villages. It is remarkable that the boundary of the National Park preserves the boundary of the Royal Forest almost intact, as can be worked out from the settlement system: namely the Royal Forest was most probably the territory surrounded by the settlements.

This system was dramatically altered by the Ottoman occupation of the area in the mid-sixteenth century. Not only did the monasteries disappear, but the whole settlement structure was also demolished (all but four settlements were depopulated for some time at least). When the kingdom was liberated in the late seventeenth century, Pilis was practically empty. New

settlers had to be brought mainly from the Slovak regions, although for example Szentendre still preserves some of its Serb population and culture. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Pilis was partly royal possession, and partly private holding of magnates and that of the monastic orders that reappeared after the Ottomans had gone. Most of the wood in this period went to supply the Habsburg garrison in Pest-Buda. Since the twentieth century Pilis has been taken care of by the state, through the Pilis Parkforestry and, more recently, the Duna-Ipoly National Park.

6.3. The Natural Aspect

6.3.1. Description

In close connection with the historical development outlined above, Visegrád and Pilis preserve many rare and interesting aspects of wildlife. In consequence, they are part of the Duna-Ipoly National Park, formed in 1997. Pilis is also one of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserves since 1981.[30] This, nonetheless, is somewhat problematic. When the Biosphere Reserve was set up, it equalled the Pilis Nature Protection Area of 1978. The latter was the basis for the creation of the National Park in 1997. However, the present National Park is bigger than the Nature Protection Area of 1978, because some additional territories came under protection between '78 and '97. Does the Biosphere Reserve include these areas as well? Also, the existence of the Biosphere Reserve should, in theory, have been promulgated by law, but that has not happened yet, because essential (and expensive) topographical data are missing to do this. In general, the Biosphere Reserve appears to be an elegant title rather than anything else, and has been in a hybernating state for a quarter of a century.

There are two core-areas of the Biosphere Reserve in the proposed World Heritage area and further eight in the buffer zone. In the recently established Forest-Reserve Programme of the Nature Conservation Authority of the Ministry for Environment, the buffer zone features two reserves: Pilis-peak and Prédikálószék, the latter of which has a common boundary with the core area of the proposed World Heritage site.[31] Rare plants and animals in the region range from *Linum dolomiticum*, a small and fragile plant, which is not found anywhere else in the

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[29] Mátyás Szőke, *Visegrád: Ispánsági központ* (Visegrád: county centre) (N. p.: TKM Egyesület, 1986).
[30] Károly Janata, *Beszámoló jelentés a Pilis Bioszféra Rezervátumról* (Report on the Pilis Biosphere Reserve) (unpublished, 2004).
[31] Ferenc Horváth, Katalin Mázsa, and Géza Temesi, "Az erdőrezervátum-program" (Forest reserves programme in Hungary), *ER* 1 (2001): 5-20.

world, through *Ferula sadleriana* on top of Pilis-peak, which grows in altogether six places in Europe, to the more familiar *Pulsatilla grandis*, red and roe deer and wild swine.

6.3.2. Woodland Management

Woodland and tree management started in the Carpathian Basin in the Mezolithic, and was probably a well-established practice in the Neolithic. Before the appearance of modern forestry (ca. 1800), the main purposes of woodland management were the production of *timber* (for building) and *wood* (for fuel). Wood was needed in higher quantitites and more regularly, and therefore it was the more important product. The essential technique for wood production is called *coppicing*. This uses the property of broad-leaved trees that each time they are cut, they grow again from the stock, which becomes a coppice-*stool*. Stools get bigger every time the young shoots are cut, ancient ones can be several metres across. Such giant stools are a permanent feature of ancient woodland across Europe. Coppicing produces perfect firewood: many thin rods that can be put on the fire almost without further work.

Foresters (practicioners of modern forestry) disprove of coppicing. Their main has always been the production of timber trees (long, straight trunks originating from seeds). They often claim that this has to do with the protection of nature and the bringing of woodland back to its natural state (whichever way they choose to imagine this). In fact, none of this is true. Modern forestry is based on a market and human attitude that values only timber trees. Unbelievable amounts of money were spent over the last two centuries to transform coppice woods into timber-only woods (German *hochwald*). This took various forms. At one extreme, perfect ancient woods were destroyed and replanted with trees (often conifers). In other places, stools were left to be overshadowed by timber trees (which they cannot stand) and die. In many woods, stool were sold to tenants who dug them out and burnt them. Some coppice woods, however, survive.

In Pilis, at every place where it is not the methods of modern forestry that dominate the landscape we find coppices. These are relics of traditional woodland management and should be protected. How to protect them is a difficult question. In a coppice system, *cutting* is an essential element. Nowadays, on the other hand, nature protection is imagined as “not interfering with nature.” Nature protectionists are reluctant to comprehend that cutting trees can be good for woodland. It is, however, beyond doubt that coppices must be cut: otherwise biodiversity rapidly declines, because the periodic changes in sun and shade which coppicing

provides and which are used by many different kinds of plants and animals, are substituted by monotonous shade, which few plants can tolerate.

6.4. Ownership

It is essential that the ownership of any given site is free of complications. This is an especially burning issue in East-Central Europe, where fifteen years ago the old system of land-ownership was swept away together with communism. Hatfield Forest and Burnham Beeches, especially the latter, demonstrate how a continuous unproblematic ownership situation can help with the management of sites. This applies to Białowieża as well. On the other hand, the LVA demonstrates the kind of complications ownership can create. This site also warns us that such problems must be faced sooner or later. Although the issue was avoided at the time of the WH nomination of the LVA, this does not mean that it could be disregarded for good.

Visegrád, although the territory of the site and the buffer zone are almost exclusively state-owned, is rather similar to Lednice-Valtice, where the World Heritage territory belongs to many owners. The three main bodies[32] are the local King Matthias Museum, the Duna-Ipoly National Park,[33] and the Pilis Parkforestry. The trouble in the situation is that it is almost impossible to separate ownership from management at the site. None of the three institutions *own* their respective territories (which, as mentioned above, are state-owned), they only *manage* them. State ownership has the advantage that none of the site can be, say, sold and turned into a shopping mall, however, except for this one issue, the three institutions act as if they owned the land, therefore management is rather complicated. We shall come back to this issue when discussing management plans.

6.5. Legal Protection

The territory is protected by a number of different laws. The whole area is part of the Duna-Ipoly National Park (since 1997), subject to Act No. LIII of 1996 on Nature Conservation. The woods are also protected by Act No. LIV of 1996 on the Protection of Woodland. The Pilis part of the National Park (the buffer zone of the site) is also one of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserves, although that does not carry further protection in a legal sense. The built

[32] The forth is the town of Visegrád, however, with an insignificant proportion.

[33] There is an odd distinction in Hungary between National Parks (pieces of land) and National Park Directorates (administrative organizations). The Directorates are responsible for larger areas than pertinent National Parks. In this paper, however, I shall use „National Park" to mean both. I do not think this will cause any confusion.

heritage managed by the Museum is subject to Act LIV of 1997 on Historic Building Preservation. At the moment, there is no territorial protection in Visegrád, but the buildings of the site are all protected individually. It is obvious that there is no need for further legal protection at the site. The situation, however, is not free of problems. The Acts on Nature Conservation and Protection of Woodland, although born at the same time, are sometimes contradictory. It has recently been argued in a policy document issued by the Ministry for the Environment entitled "The Forestry Concept of Nature Protection and Its Long-Term Development Strategy" that these such contradictions should be dealt with by harmonizing the pertinent Acts.[34] However, we do not learn how exactly this should happen. Also, there is much to do in terms of law enforcement. The Act on Nature Conservation, for example, prescribes the National Park to have three different kinds of protected areas delimited in its territory. This, however, has not happened yet, because the National Park cannot come to an agreement with the Parkforestry about the issue.

6.6. Administration

6.6.1. Staff

The four institutions involved with the site have vastly different staffing levels. The Local Government has twenty-odd employees, however, as they are not directly involved in the management of the site, this number is of little concern here. The Museum has a director, five archaeologists, two restaurators, three full-time and one part-time financial staff, a museum-pedagogue, around ten people in maintenance, and several seasonal staff employed as caretakers.

	Director		
Scientific Department	PR	Maintenance	Finance Department
5 archaeologists, 2 restaurators	1 museum pedagogue	gardener, cleaning personnel, porters, etc.	Financial Director
	seasonal staff		2,5 financial staff

[34] *A természetvédelem erdészeti szakmai koncepciója és távlati fejlesztési feladatai* (The forestry concept of nature protection and its long-term development strategy) (Budapest: Környezetvédelmi és Vízügyi Minisztérium, Természetvédelmi Hivatal, 2004).

The Duna-Ipoly National Park Directorate is responsible for the area of the National Park itself (60,314 ha) and further 37 protected areas (ca. 130,000 ha). Around 80 people are employed on a full-time basis. The Pilis branch, however, comprises only four people: the leader and three employees of equal status. Each are responsible for certain territories (ca. 5700 ha per person on average!) and also certain areas of activity. These are somewhat formal distinctions: with only four people, everybody does everything. 10-12 volunteers help the work of the National Park in Pilis. They patrol the territory, basically their role is to try and warn people (mostly tourists) when the latter are damaging the environment. Some of the area (around Esztergom, in the World Heritage buffer zone) is managed by the National Park (and not the Parkforestry), in which private enterprises are also involved.

The Pilis Parkforestry is a large and powerful institution. They manage more than 60,000 ha of woodland in five counties and Budapest. The company consists of ten branches, the Visegrád Forestry is one of these. Its organizational structure is the following.

	Director of branch	
leader of wood usage and forestry operations	leader of hunting and public welfare services	leading acountant
6 district leader foresters		accountant, abstractor, cashier
	leader of educational centre receptionist	

The other branches, responsible for areas in the WH buffer zone, employ similar numbers of staff. It is then obvious that out of all the institutions involved, the Parkforestry is in the most favourable position as far as staff level is concerned. This is in accordance with the present management requirements, as we shall see below: most of the territory is managed by the Parkforestry. However, it is also clear that the National Park can afford to employ sadly too few people.

It is difficult to compare Visegrád to other sites, because of the structural differences that exist. With ‘unified’ sites, figures are simple to interpret. At Visegrád, however, there are many institutions involved, most of which form part of a greater framework.

6.6.2. Budget

The town of Visegrád had a yearly budget of around 600 million HUF for 2003, one sixth of which came from the government, the rest was produced locally. This budget is tight: there is little room to manouver.

The 2003 budget of the National Park Directorate, as a whole, was ca. one billion HUF. About half of this came from governmental resources. One fifth was spent on salaries, the same amount on investments, and somewhat more on material expenditures. These amounts, however, can largely vary from year to year. The other problem concerning our topic is that the above numbers refer to the whole of the National Park Directorate, and number for the Pilis unit cannot be produced in any meaningful way. Dividing the amount based on the areas would be misleading because many of the activities of the National Park are centralized. Looking at yearly figures of money spent on different units of the National Park would be completely accidental. To at least give a feeling of the amount we are concerned with, I can only summarize the numbers we have just seen: the National Park Directorate is responsible for approximately 200,000 ha of land with 80 people and one billion HUF yearly. The Pilis unit is 23,000 ha and 4 people.

To a large extent the same considerations apply to the budget of the Pilis Parkforestry, as well, although units of the Parkforestry have more independence than those of the National Park. The Pilis Parkforestry had a yearly budget of more than three billion HUF in 2003, of which approximately 300 million belonged to the Visegrád unit (which is proportionately correct, as there are ten units). They spent more than eighty million on salaries.

6.6.3. Management Plans

The situation at Visegrád and Pilis, as we have seen in connection with ownership, is complex, and has four main characters: the town of Visegrád, the local King Matthias Museum, the National Park, and the Pilis Parkforestry.

The Management Plan of the town of Visegrád was issued on 30 of June, 2004. As all of the inner area of Visegrád is outside the proposed World Heritage site, this Plan has little direct relevance to the present topic. It notes that existence of the monuments and the National Park, and imposes protection on their territories, but it does not go further than that, implying that

managing these areas is the responsibility of the Museum, the National Park, and the Pilis Parkforestry.

The King Matthias Museum is affiliated to the Hungarian National Museum. It is a partly independent unit, however, economically and financially the National Museum exercises control over it, and there is an increasing tendency towards centralization. At the moment, there is no territorial protection in the town of Visegrád, only single monuments are protected. This should not be a problem as far as the World Heritage is concerned: all the monuments proposed to be included are protected. The only problem is the Upper Castle. This very touristy location (with over 300,000 visitors yearly) is in a most peculiar situation. At the end of a complicated story, it became the *property* of the local forestry institution, the Pilis Parkforestry. The irony of the situation is that the Parkforestry only manages the woodland at Visegrád, the territory is state-owned. Therefore the Parkforestry does not own a single tree in Pilis, but owns a castle. It is clear to all those involved that this situation should change, however, they do not agree on the ideal solution. The Parkforestry would like to continue managing the Castle, which should be state-owned; while the Museum agrees about ownership but wishes to manage the Castle itself. In principle, there is much money involved: the Castle brings 150 million HUF a year from entrance fees alone. If, to complicate the situation even more, the Castle went into the hands of the Museum, it would be subject to an Act of Parliament of 2004, which made state-owned museum free to enter. The museums must be compensated for their missing income by the Government. It is easy to see that, with this Act in place, the Government would certainly not want to give the Castle to the Museum.

The Duna-Ipoly National Park was founded in 1997, incorporating the Pilis Nature Protection Area that had existed before. The whole World Heritage area in Visegrád (including the town) is part of the National Park, and is protected as such. This protection should be implemented through the Management Plan of the National Park. This, however, does not exist. It *should* by law, but under the current circumstances the National Park cannot produce it. As a temporary solution, the Management Plan of the Pilis Parkforestry applies to the region. It is, in fact, the Parkforestry that manages the area, in other words, it is the foresters that actually do things.

The Management Plan of the Parkforestry is renewed every ten years. 2004 has been the third year of the present Plan, a very detailed document covering topics from history to game

management.[35] Here, I shall not discuss the practicalities of the Plan, but rather point out some of the contradictions inherent in the situation.

The Pilis Parkforestry is a state-owned limited company, which manages, but does not own the woods in Pilis. It must be stressed that at the moment the Parkforestry is a commercial enterprise partly aimed at producing profit from the woods, and is therefore engaged in commercial woodland management. Nature protection, although the National Park is a higher authority than the Parkforestry, is in a rather passive position. The National Park has to countersign every action that is planned by the foresters, but it cannot actively *make* the Parkforestry do anything. I shall bring an example to illustrate what this means in practice.

Meadows are typical examples of semi-natural, cultural landscapes. No one has planted their characteristic plants, but without regular mowing, they would be colonised by trees and disappear.[36] The meadows in Pilis are no exception. The National Park, however, has no means to tell the Parkforestry to mow the meadows. They can only say yes or no to the actions proposed by the Parkforestry. If no mowing is proposed, the National Park cannot save the meadows.

Let us suppose that at some point in the future the management plan of the National Park will be ready. This will result in one place having two different management plans, with the management plan of the town in the background. It is hard to believe that this would be an ideal situation. The policy document I have already mentioned ("The Forestry Concept of Nature Protection and Its Long-Term Development Strategy") includes a section on management plans, and specifically on the management plans of such territories as Pilis. Unfortunately, the directions are somewhat blurry: there should be "co-operation" between forestries and national parks, and problems (such as the meadows described above) should be solved. *How exactly* this should happen, however, is not described in any detail. The reason for this is that the actual problem lies deeper than the level of management plans. All parties seem to agree that the present situation of forestries is no longer compatible with the changed circumstances. Because forestries (including the Pilis Parkforestry) are limited companies,

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[35] Imre Zátonyi, ed., *A Pilisi Parkerdő Rt. Visegrádi Erdészet erdőgazdálkodási egység 2002. I. 1. - 2011. XII. 31-ig terjedő időszakra érvényes körzeti erdőterve* (The forestry management plan of the Visegrád unit of the Pilis Parkforestry Ltd. concerning the period 1.1.2002 – 31.12.2011) (Visegrád: 2002).

[36] William J. Sutherland and David A. Hill, ed., *Managing Habitats for Conservation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 197–230.

they have economic pressures on them from the side of the state: they have to make profit. Their company status also means that they cannot get any funding from the state for nature protection. Even if they understand and possibly share the ideas of the national parks, they are very often not in the position to comply with them. The obvious solution would be to transform forestries (or at least those that operate mostly in protected areas) into budgetary agencies, which would releave economic pressures and would open sources of funding from the state. Once this is done, the Duna-Ipoly National Park and the Pilis Parkforestry could start a meaningful co-operation, and work towards a possibly united management. This, however, is long way ahead, and what course of events will in fact follow remains to be seen.

In sum, it is clear that management – including ownership – is a very problematic issue, some aspects of which reach much further than the scope of a World Heritage project. The World Heritage Management Plan has a peculiar status in the present situation. Unlike all other plans discussed so far, it has no statutory power other than the possible removing of the site from the WH List if the Management Plan is disregarded. It will really be a list of things every party agrees should be achieved. Ironically, this may be an asset: it could serve as a starting point that might, in the future, lead to unified management.

6.7. Summary

In this essay, I have studied very different sites. Even the term 'site' may not be applied to some. The LVA would not qualify as a 'site' in the eyes of many site managers. This is one of the drawbacks (or advantages) of the World Heritage process. World Heritage nominations sometimes pick places that are united symbolically rather than in practical terms. Visegrád is one of these. However, in most cases (such as the LVA and Visegrád) there exist perfectly valid reasons why the sites should be unified. The World Heritage title can be a useful tool in achieving this goal.

It is very obvious that simple and clear ownership is important for the succesful management of heritage sites. Hatfield, Burnham, and Białowieża were good examples of this. Visegrád, on the other hand, is in a sense more similar to the Lednice-Valtice region. We also have to see, however, that ownership has close ties with management. Although most of the territory at Visegrád is owned by the state, the everyday realities are closer to the LVA than to Białowieża, because it is managed by different organizations. All institutions involved in the management of Visegrád and Pilis are aware of this, and they all agree that the final aim is to

have unified management, which in effect means one institution taking over the role of all the others. How this could be done, and which institution this should be is not clear at all.

Both the case-studies and Visegrád prove that in this part of Europe legal protection is more than adequate. None of the places I have studied were threatened in any sense because of the lack of protective legislation. There are two problems, also present at Visegrád. One of these is enforcement: what the law says is one thing, and what happens at the site might be another. The second problem is that most sites are subject to more than one set of regulations, and these are often contradictory. At Visegrád, it is important to notice that the problems and contradictions have been realized at the pertinent Ministries, and solutions are being sought. Changes will certainly happen in the near future. The next steps at Visegrád must be taken in light of those changes.

It appeared difficult to compare the staffing levels of different sites. At sites with a single responsible institution (Hatfield, Burnham, Bialowieza) comparisons might be possible, however, at Visegrád and the LVA, numbers simply do not make sense. It is clear the Duna-Ipoly National Park has too few people in Pilis, but how many employees should work here depends on the future organizational structure of the site, the relationship between the National Park and the Parkforestry, etc. The same applies to the budgets: comparisons can be completely misleading.

Management plans have very different statuses at the sites discussed. The LVA does not even have a management plan proper, whereas for example at Hatfield and Burnham Beeches, the plans are rather detailed, and there may be several types for different purposes. Visegrád is again somewhere in between. There are separate management plans for each institution (except for the National Park), but these do not treat the site as a meaningful unit. World Heritage management plans are a different question, which can play a useful role exactly here. Białowieża does not really need a WH management plan, because the whole site is covered by the management plan of the local National Park. At the LVA and Visegrád, however, the WH management plan could, as I have argued above, serve as the baseline for common understanding, from which unified management would spring in the future.

6.8. Indicators for Assessment

These indicators are the summary of what I have learnt to be important for the site through this study and through years of work on other aspects. Some relate to nature, some to cultural (built) heritage, some to administrative matters. Some of them are easy to express in numbers, others require a written description, because numbers could be pointless, misleading, or worse, could induce changes to meaninglessly produce the required numbers. In the following, I shall describe each criterion.

1. Occurrence of foreign, invasive species

Property and buffer zone

This should be expressed in the number of species present, and with a distribution map showing how much of the area is affected by each plant. Animals (mostly muflons) could be included. A current list of plant species to be monitored can be found in a WWF report.[37]

2. State of Biosphere Reserve core areas and woodland reserves

Property and buffer zone

There are two UNESCO Biosphere core areas in the WH property. Further eight core areas are in the buffer zone. Their state is, in theroy, monitored within the MAB (Man and Biosphere) UNESCO programme, the results of which are expressed numerically.

The Woodland Reserve Programme[38] has two reserves in Pilis. Both of them are also Biosphere Reserve core areas. The separate monitoring system of the Woodland Reserve Programme offers an opportunity for independent control over the Biosphere Reserve monitoring.

These areas are not only good indicators as single important places, but, as vulnerable habitats, they also react quickly to any changes in the wider area.

3. Percentage of natural woodland as opposed to plantations

Property and buffer zone

[37] Tamás Exner and Benedek Jávor, ed., *Erdőfigyelő jelentés 2003: A védett területek kezeléséről a WWF Magyarország felmérésének tükrében* (Woodland monitoring report 2003: On the management of protected areas in light of the survey of WWF Hungary), WWF füzetek 21 (Budapest: WWF Magyarország, 2003), 13.

[38] http://www.erdorezervatum.hu

It is a key issue in woodland conservation that local native trees are not replaced by plantations of either non-local (usually bred) native, or non-native trees. The replacement of trees should be left to natural means as much as possible in the given economic and forestry conditions.

4. Presence of rare, non-woodland plants

Property and buffer zone

To be expressed in numbers of species and distribution maps. The preservation of plant species specific to non-wooded environments in Pilis is dependent on the efforts of nature conservation, and is a good indicator of how much pressure the National Park can put on the Parkforestry, and therefore of the status of nature conservation versus economic forestry in general.

5. Numbers of deer

Property and buffer zone

To be expressed in numbers of all deer species present. The abundance of deer is among the biggest problem for woodland conservation all around the world. In Hungary, their proliferation is due mostly to the successful lobbying of hunting organizations (that is, because of the income they produce).

6. Changes in built heritage

Property

These cannot be grasped in numbers, but are a key issue at Visegrád. The restoration of monuments started more than a century ago, and today is an especially hot issue because of the rebuilding of the royal palace. The best solution would be a written report on what happened in this respect and how it was percieved by professionals and the wider public.

7. Ownership and management of upper castle

The situation of the upper castle has been laid out in 6.6.3.2. This indicator may seem more like a goal (that is, a slightly different goal for the Museum and the Parkforestry), however, the antecedents tell us that the story is unlikely to come to a generally accepted end in the near future. An independent observer should prepare reports on the issue.

8. Temporary exhibitions at Musuem

To be expressed in numbers of exhibitions, visitors, and entrance fees. This is probably a temporary indicator, designed for the present situation of the Museum. As the permanent exhibitions of the Museum are free to enter, the only way to create income from visitors is to increase the number of temporary exhibitions. This indicator should be removed from the list if free entrance is abolished.

9. Excavations and research

Property

Excavations to be expressed in territory covered and working hours and money spent. It has to be accompanied by a written report from the Museum explaining the reasons for increases or decreases, and also summarizing research carried out in the given period. Excavations are not continuous, but the Museum should be able to afford either excavations or the processing of the excavated material at any one time.

10. Budgets of pertinent institutions

To be expressed in numbers and categories. Changes in the scheme should be explained in a written form.

11. Numbers of staff in Museum, National Park, Parkforestry

12. Status of Parkforestry

Somewhat similar to the upper castle indicator, this promises to be an ongoing issue rather than a situation solved instantly. At the moment, the problem is expresed in terms of limited company versus budgetary agency, however, this may change again in the future, therefore a written report should summarize the situation.

13. Percentage of woodland managed by National Park

Property and buffer zone

It is now governmental policy that National Parks should manage as much of their territories as possible. Comparative research also shows that this would be an effective way to strengthen the position of nature conservation.

14. Visitor numbers

Property and buffer zone

To be expressed in numbers of visitors to Museum, upper castle, and National Park.